

Message Text

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PAGE 01 REYKJA 01070 151709Z
ACTION EUR-12

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE REYKJAVIK 1070

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, IC
SUBJECT: SOCIAL DEMOCRATS QUIT THREE-PARTY TALKS

REF: (A) REYKJAVIK 1054 (NOTAL); (B) REYKJAVIK 0990 DTG 300850Z
JUL 78

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED.

1. SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SDP) CHAIRMAN BENEDIKT GRONDAL INFORMED INDEPENDENCE PARTY (IP) CHAIRMAN GEIR HALLGRIMSSON AUGUST 15 THAT SDP WOULD NOT CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS WITH IP AND PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PP) AIMED AT FORMING COALITION AMONG THEM. AS PREPOTED IN PRESS, GRONDAL STATED THAT PARTY WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN PROPOSED IP-PP-SDP COALITION WHICH WOULD APPEAR TO BOTH VOTERS AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AS MERELY NEW VERSION OF PERSENT IP-PP GOVERNMENT THAT WAS REJECTED IN JUNE.

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PAGE 02 REYKJA 01070 151709Z

2. FUTURE OF CURRENT ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS NOW IN DOUBT. HALLGRIMSSON STILL HOLDS MANDATE FROM PRESIDENT ELDJARN TO FORM NEXT GOVERNMENT. AFTER AUGUST 14 ROUND OF THREE-PARTY NEGOTIATIONS, IP CHAIRMAN MET WITH PRESIDENT, BUT THERE HAS BEEN NO INDICATION OF SUBSTANCE OF THEIR TALKS. HALLGRIMSSON WILL NOW HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER TO ATTEMPT NEW COALITION WITHOUT SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPA-

TION OR RETURN MANDATE TO PRESIDENT.
END UNCLASSIFIED.

3. COMMENT: MEMBERS OF SDP PARLIAMENTARY FACTION HAD MIS-
GIVINGS ABOUT JOINING WITH IP AND PP BUT SEEMED WILLING TO
GIVE IT A TRY. OBJECTION TO PARTICIPATION IN THIS THREE-
PARTY COALITION STEMMED NOT FROM POLICY DIFFERENCES BUT FROM
SDP DESIRE TO SHOW THAT IT WAS MORE THAN FIFTH WHEEL (SINCE
IP AND PP TOGETHER, WITH 32 ALTHING SEATS, HAVE ENOUGH TO
RECONSTITUTE PRESENT TWO-PARTY GOVERNMENT). MOREOVER, SOME
SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, DESPITE THEIR ANTIPATHY TOWARD COMMUNIST-
LED PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE (PA), STILL FELT THAT ONLY WAY TO GET
BROAD BACKING FOR NEW GOVERNMENT WAS TO INCLUDE PA BECAUSE
OF THAT PARTY'S STRENGTH AMONG LABOR.

4. WITHIN LAST FEW DAYS, SDP HAS BEEN UNDER SOME PRESSURE TO
PULL OUT OF THREE-PARTY TALKS AND TRY AGAIN TO FIND BASIS
FOR COMPROMISE WITH PA. LARGE GENRAL AND RANSPORT
WORKERS' FEDERATION, WHOSE PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT
ARE MEMBERS OF PA AND SDP RESPECTIVELY, CALLED UPON TWO
PARTIES TO RESUME TALKS. NOTWITHSTANDING ACRIMONIOUS
EXCHANGES BETWEEN MEMBERS OF BOTH PARTIES FOLLOWING
BREAKUP OF TALKS AMONG SDP, PA AND PP (REF B), SPECULATION
NOW FOCUSES ON RESUMPTION OF INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN
SDP AND PA. ONE REPORT SUGGESTS THAT MINORITY SDP-PA
GOVERNMENT MAY BE IN OFFING WITH CABINET COMPOSED OF
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PAGE 03 REYKJA 01070 151709Z

MEMBERS OF EACH PARTY AS WELL AS NON-POLITICAL FIGURES.
LIKE OTHER COALITION ATTEMPTS, THIS WOULD REQUIRE CONSIDER-
ABLE EFFORT TO PULL OFF.
BLAKE

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